- To increase the production of cereals in the country, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Rice), Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Wheat Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Wheat) and Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Coarse Cereals Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Coarse Cereals)" subsumed under Macro Management Mode of Agriculture are being implemented to provide more flexibility to States based on local needs.

- To increase the production and productivity of oilseeds and pulses, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize" (ISOPOM) is being implemented since 01.04.2004.

Suicides by farmers in Orissa

903. SHRI BHAGIRATHI MAJHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to drought, a number of farmers have committed suicide in the western part of Orissa;

(b) whether Government has any plan to give grants for relief to the affected people;

(c) if so, the action taken in this regard by Government, so far; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) As reported by the State Government of Orissa, 23 incidents of alleged suicide by farmers have taken place, but the State Government has not been able to ascertain so far whether anyone or more out of these alleged suicides have been caused due to agrarian distress. However, investigations by the State Police are going on this regard. In any case, the State Government has released a sum of Rs. 20 crore from Calamity Relief Fund to 15 districts covering 3305 villages/wards where autumn paddy crop loss is 50% or more.

Discrimination against farmers of Bundelkhand

†904. SHRI GANGA CHARAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that farmers of Bundelkhand are being discriminated;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) if not, the reasons for not providing similar amount of money to farmers of Bundelkhand who are affected by drought since last five years that is being provided to farmers of Vidarbha while the problems and causes of farmers of Vidarbha and Bundelkhand are similar?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Planning Commission has considered a Special Package for Drought Mitigation in the Bundelkhand regions of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh for providing assistance to the districts covered under the region.

Drought situation in the country

905. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken steps to tackle the drought situation in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Due to erratic behaviour of South-West Monsoon, 2009, in all 12 States have declared drought/scarcity/drought like situation in 301 districts in the country. Steps taken by the Government to reduce the impact of drought situation in the country, *inter-alia*, include release of a sum of Rs. 4073.785 crores from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) to Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, subject to adjustment of 75% of the balance available with the States under the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF); release of central share of instalment under CRF to the tune of Rs. 1990.3275 crores, which is 75% of the State's quota; Diesel subsidy and additional power from the central pool to save the standing crop in the farmers' field; raised the distribution subsidy for the certified seeds, relaxed the age limit for seed varieties, allowed distribution of minikits and use of Truthfully Labelled (TL) Seeds under the Government programme; issued advisories and sent experts from the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) to the affected States to enable taking up of alternate crop strategy in the sowing failed/unsown areas and early Rabi.

Shortfall in agriculture production

†906. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how far the drought conditions in different drought affected districts have been neutralized by the delayed monsoon this year; and

(b) how far the agricultural yield is likely to fall short of the targets and a comparison of the yield with the yield of past three seasons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Government of India has taken various measures to neutralize impending situation of delayed monsoon which, *inter-alia*, are constitution of an Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) to

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.